in violation of the pure taste that presided over its adornment. The 'cedar parlour' is of a mellow and yet delicate colour, panelled with that expensive wood from the floor to the lofty ceiling. The adjoining room is finely proportioned; but the room on the opposite side of the building is the one that particularly attracted the attention of our artist friend. The chimney-piece still boasts some undisturbed carving, and there is a door remarkable for its simplicity.*

This probably was the architect's study; his own proper room. We would give much to know whose bust originally occupied the position which its present possessor has assigned to Sir Walter Scott. Perhaps Inigo Jones or Michaelangelo. And the window, which now only looks forth towards a chapel, then opened upon a trim parterre, guarded from all harsh winds by the 'hedges of yew,' and enjoying a sight of the 'pretty grove of oakes' that commanded even Evelyn's commendation, despite the 'melancholie' of 'Camerwell.' Here the most wonderful of men reposed from his fatigues, and, relying with the high faith of a Christian spirit upon the God who works all things together for good to them that trust in Him, was never bowed down, never shaken, never turned from his loyalty to his maker, to his ruler, to his art. Well might Steele aver that 'his personal modesty overthrew all his public actions; the modest man built the city, and the modest man's skill was unknown!'

Here, perhaps, originated the meeting which Herder asserts was the origin of the Freemasonry of St. John. Here, with a few friends, to save his journey home to dinner, he arranged to dine somewhere in the neighbourhood of St. Paul's; and a club was thus formed, which by degrees introduced a formula of initiation and rules for the conduct of the members expressed by symbolic language, derived from the masonic profession. Knight thinks it rather corroborative of Herder's assertion, that, while the biographers of Wren mention the attendance of the lodge of Freemasons, of which he was the master, at the ceremony of placing the highest stone of the lantern, no mention is made of their attendance at laying the foundation stone; and every lodge in Great Britain is an offshoot from the lodge of antiquity of which Sir Christopher was master! We can fancy these walls covered with his plans, and, as the twilight gathered round us, might almost hear the music of his clear, sweet, demonstrative voice replying kindly to those who questioned upon all points, by short but satisfactory answers. Perhaps when at breakfast in this very room, when told that the frightful hurricane of the previous night had damaged all the steeples in London, he observed, with his quiet, faithful smile, 'Not St. Dunstan's, I am sure.'"

* This is scarcely the correct expression; but the excellent writer, fortunately for her, is not an architect. The door has a cap with consoles, and a large elliptical "broken pediment" with a bust in the gap.—ED.

Books.

Suggested Legislation with a View to the Improvement of the Dwellings of the Poor. By G. POULETT SCROPE, Esq., M.P. Ridgway, Piccadilly.

In this little pamphlet the author proposes to exempt from poor rate, or rather from local taxation generally, dwellings below a certain annual value; and to prevent the demolition of cottages and the hinderance to their erection in 'close' parishes, by re-enlarging the area of poor-law taxation to the union in place of the parish. A third point suggested is such a relaxation of the law as shall empower lifeowners of property to grant modified or limited titles to sites for cottages.

London (Watford) Spring-water Company. Report to the Directors. By Mr. S. C. HOMERSHAM, C.E. Weale, High Holborn.

Remarks on the Water Supply of London. By Sir WILLIAM CLAY, Bart., M.P. Ridgway.

The former of these relates to the source, quality, distribution, and cost of the projected Watford supply, and contains a map of the district and work-sites, a geological map, and a section of the experimental well at Bushey Meadows, Herts.——In the latter, the author, who is chairman of the Grand Junction and Southwark and Vauxhall Water Companies, contributes what he regards as exclusive information, to the public, derived through his official position. The necessity of some decided improvement in the supply of water to the metropolis, however, even he clearly admits, while advocating the cause of established companies.

Elementary Instruction in the Art of Illumination and Missal Painting on Vellum, with Illustrations for Copying, for the Student. By D. DE LARA. Ackermann, Strand and Regent-street.

M. DE LARA here gives some useful elementary instruction, such as his pupils doubtless derive from his personal teaching, but ought to have gone farther.

The Year-book of Facts for 1849-50. By JOHN TIMBS, editor of "The Arcana of Science and Art." Illustrated with engravings. Bogue, Fleet-street.

As valuable and sterling an accumulation of fresh contributions to the riches of science and art as ever, as our readers will all the more readily believe when we hint to them that for much of it, admittedly, the judicious editor is indebted as heretofore to the treasury of THE BUILDER. By the way, in a memoir of Captain Sir John Franklin, a portrait of whom accompanies the present volume, we observe it stated, that the first wife of Sir John was the youngest daughter of Mr. William Porden, the architect.

Miscellanea.

DEFLECTION OF IRON GIRDERS.—It is considered that girders should not deflect more than from 1-600th to 1-400th of their length according to the form of the girder. It does not appear from the evidence given before the Strength of Iron Commission that a weight equal to what a girder is constructed to carry will, even if left on for any length of time, cause the deflection of the girder to increase, unless subjected at the same time to considerable changes of temperature. Some experiments made by Mr. Fairbairn and Mr. Braidwood show that iron loses a considerable proportion of its strength when heated to a temperature of more than 220° F., and that it becomes uncertain below 32°. Mr. Clark described the effect of the sun coming out and shining on the Conway tubular bridge for half an hour to have been to raise the tube vertically one inch; and he mentions that at night, from the lower temperature, the deflection was always greater than in the day-time. Mr. Fox instances the effect of frequent and great changes of temperature on some short girders, 6 feet long, which support the hoods of the forges in his workshops. In the day-time they are so warm that the hand can only just bear the heat; and at night they become cold. The effect is to make the girders *sway*, and the swagging appears to be continually increasing. Some have attained as much as 3" deflection in the centre; but their strength does not seem to be impaired. The general opinion as to the amount of test which should be applied to girders appeared to be, that the test should amount to twice the greatest load. Mr. Joseph Cubitt would employ three times the greatest load, or half the breaking weight; and Mr. Thomas Cubitt considers it safer to test a girder almost to the extent that would break it than not to prove it at all, as the testing of girders is the only means of discovering defects under the surface and concealed from the eye. Mr. Brunel, however, thinks that a girder should not be tested with a weight exceeding the greatest load, as the object in testing is to ascertain the soundness of the casting, which may be judged of by its appearance under the load, and all risk of permanent injury should be carefully avoided.

THE AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL ART-UNION.—The first annual distribution of this society took place on the 10th January. The principal prizes were Ary Scheffer's "The Dead Christ," and Woldmuller's "Children leaving School." The number of subscribers was 5,600, and the sum paid, 28,000 dollars. 1,200 dollars were appropriated to send a young artist to England for two years to study.

PROVINCIAL.—St. Nicholas's Church, Witham, has been re-opened, after having its pews replaced by open oak seats, two galleries at the west end removed, and the tower window exposed to view, &c. The window is to be filled with stained glass by Wailes, presented by Mr. J. T. Scott, as a memorial of Mr. H. Mortimer, a native of Witham, who was killed while acting as clerk of works at Hamburg Cathedral, as already noticed in THE BUILDER. By the alterations 150 sittings have been gained.——Tenders have been lodged for the erection of a Wesleyan schoolhouse at South Molton,—the highest 248*l*., lowest, 170*l*.——A new mariners' church has been erected at Runcorn, by the Earl of Ellesmere. It is in the Early English style, and of rough walling stone: roof and seats open; sittings, 220.——During the late high tide, the new dock excavations at Sunderland were flooded, and it will cost 1,200*l*. and a month's delay to pump out the water.——The Cockermouth churchyard has become so chocked with the remains of human bodies, coffins, and earth, that the pressure from within has burst out the high wall surrounding it, and thrown down the greater part of a mass 14 feet high, and 80 to 90 yards long.——The back wall of a store in Alston-street, Glasgow, almost opposite the sugar house which fell, gave way on Tuesday week, and fell into a court behind the building, which was filled with flour and other goods, and had been partly rebuilt and strengthened with iron fastenings, at the instance of the Dean of Guild Court, shortly after the catastrophe at the sugar house.

IMPROVEMENT OF THE ROYAL HOSPITAL, GREENWICH.—As President of the Greenwich Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, I cannot allow the Vandal proceedings in these improvements without recording my veto against a part of them, and I do hope that the insertion of this letter in your valuable publication will have the desired effect of drawing the attention of those who may yet prevent the disgrace of this noble institution. The removal of the unsightly outbuildings and forming lawns is certainly a great improvement, and will add much to the beauty of this building, but it is to be regretted that in rebuilding the lodges at the head entrance they should have been advanced so far as to obtrude on the footway,—it is the opinion of all persons of taste that they should certainly have been kept in a line with the lower helpless wards and the mews. Now, my opinion is, that this mews is the real cause of the gates being placed so close to the road side as must interfere with the ingress and egress when the steam-boats discharge their thousands of visitors to Greenwich: and, forsooth, this mews only contains two horses belonging to the little commissioner who has the whole arrangement of these improvements. I will not add more, but leave the *case* in the hands of *public opinion*, that the head entrance may yet be placed in its proper situation.—PRIOR PURVIS, M.D.

THE ALMSHOUSES OF FISHMONGERS' COMPANY.—In your agreeable article on the Fishmongers' new almshouses, you say, and truly, that the site was then (when the present almshouses were built) an open healthy spot in the country, far away from the town. It is now in the heart of a crowded neighbourhood; the buildings, too, are dilapidated: and you go on to add, "and for these, or other reasons, with which we are unacquainted, the Company determined on the removal of the hospital." &c. I beg to inform you that the reasons you have mentioned were precisely those which decided the Company to the change, viz., that the site was no longer what was suitable and what the founders fixed on, but, indeed, the very reverse, as everybody will allow who knows the vicinity; and the buildings being so dilapidated as to require re-erection, it was a question whether they should be rebuilt on the spot or elsewhere. It was a difficult matter to find a new suitable situation; ground about London is every where so sought for. To remove too far was objectionable; to be clear of the smoke and fog and noise of the town was desirable; and the new site offering, the Company decided on buying it, though at a very considerable cost, out of their own funds. They expect their reward in the satisfaction arising from a compliance with the wishes of the founders, and the providing means of ease and happiness for decayed members in the decline of life.—W. WANSEY.

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